

DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
1600 - 9th STREET
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814

Press Release

contact: Nora A. Romero, Chief
Office of Community & Consumer Relations
(916) 654-2309 Fax: (916) 654-3198

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

REGIONAL COMMUNITY TREATMENT FACILITIES WILL SOON BE AVAILABLE FOR CHILDREN WHO ARE SEVERELY EMOTIONALLY DISTURBED

Sacramento--Stephen W. Mayberg, Ph.D., Director of the Department of Mental Health (DMH), announced the approval and release of regulations governing Community Treatment Facilities (CTFs) for treatment of children who are severely emotionally disturbed (SED).

Currently, children who are SED may be placed in unlocked group homes in California, hospitalized, or sent out of state to remote, or locked facilities. "CTFs are sub-acute mental health treatment facilities that will provide an appropriate in-state alternative placement for children who are currently placed out of state so that we can bring them back to California and place them closer to home. This will help us provide better oversight over the children's care and enable their families to be involved in the treatment program," said Dr. Mayberg. "The DMH has been working closely with counties to determine regional mental health treatment needs so that CTF treatment programs can be designed to provide children with the services they need in their community. We hope to add the 400 beds, that are approved by statute, statewide in early 1999," said Dr. Mayberg.

"Many children who are SED have a history of running away from homes or group homes, may act out violently and impulsively, or make decisions that are dangerous for themselves or others," said Dr. Mayberg. All of these children will be receiving mental health treatment to address these problems while residing in a CTF. If a child attempts to harm himself or others, CTF mental health professionals will be able to order "secure containment" to keep them and the other residents safe. The CTF perimeter may be locked to prevent runaways, so that the children remain in a safe environment and can benefit from treatment.

The DMH will provide certification and oversight over the mental health treatment program in the CTFs. The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) will license the physical facility and provide oversight over the general care of the residents.

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